

“Jim’s Creek Baptism”

By Lex Shuler

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I had just turned 10 when I witnessed my first and only creek baptism. Mom would take us once in a while to a little country church about two miles north of where we lived. The name of the church was Givens Chapel Church. The church was holding their annual revival that summer and Mom had taken Jack and I a couple of times. This particular Sunday was the end of the revival and they were to do their baptisms after the service. After the church service everyone walked or drove to the bridge crossing Jim’s Creek about three miles away to the west.

The crowd gathered on the creek bank just west of the bridge where the creek currents had carved out a large, deep pool. The preacher, dressed in denim overalls and a white shirt was the first to wade out into the water. The crowd that attended the service gathered on the creek bank and started to sing Amazing Grace. A boy of about 15 or so came down the creek bank and waded out to where the preacher was standing in waist deep water. The boy was the first to be baptized. The preacher leaned him over backwards and lowered him into the water when the preacher raised him up the boy began shouting “Hallelujah!” Then three young women made their way out to join the preacher. They were holding hands and singing along with the crowd. They all wore dresses and one by one the preacher lowered them into the water. The crowd, standing on the creek bank, were shouting “Praise God” and “Hallelujah!” while the rest continued to sing.

Afterward, all of the congregation bid their goodbyes to one another and went their separate ways, all reflecting on what they had just witnessed. I cross the new bridge that now spans Jim’s Creek two or three times a week now and I always think of that sight. In a far simpler time, when people had much in terms of faith and time to share with others.